

Wetlands Education Display at Fairplay Visitor Center

South Park, located in Park County, Colorado, is the home to a wealth of natural resources. The area is made of 900 square miles of high altitude grasslands and wetlands surrounded by mountains from which the South Platte River arises. In order to preserve South Park's abundant natural reserve, an effort was launched by the South Park Wetlands Focus Area Committee. Some of the many partners included OEMC, the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Wildlife, Park County Commissioners, the United States Forest Service, the Natural Resources Conservation Services, Upper South Platte Watershed group, and private land owners.

The Wetlands Education Project involved implementing a system of educational exhibits at South Park City Museum in Fairplay. These exhibits feature interpretations of the outstanding interdependent resources of South Park, as well as educating students and visitors on how to care for our natural resources which includes wetlands, associated uplands and cultural resources. Both indoor and outdoor exhibits emphasize that the preservation of natural resources is critical to sustaining the character of the area, the quality of life and the local economy. Highlights of a few of the exhibits that comprise the education display are listed below.

Indoor Exhibits

- Text and photos portraying the history of mining in South Park
- Mural and text depicting how land, water, and human use affect landscape and community

Outdoor Exhibits

- A "Then and Now" depiction utilizing text and photos to reveal changes in settlement and the town building
- A "Water Story" utilizing text and photos to better understand how to care for this critical resource

For more project information, contact:

- **Park County Office of Tourism and Community Development:** Gary Nichols, 719-836-4279
- **OEMC:** Rob Pearson, 303-866-2163, www.state.co.us/oemc/
- For a link to Park County, Colorado, go to: www.parkbull.com/links.html